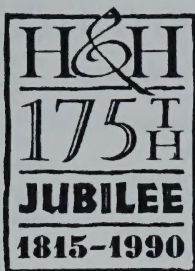


HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY



Christopher Hogwood *Artistic Director*

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIFTH SEASON, 1989-90
October 20 at 8:00 pm

FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON

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Jeffrey Rink *Conductor*

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History and Architecture of Faneuil Hall
John McConnell, H&H Architectural Lecturer

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STRAVINSKY *L'Histoire du soldat*

PART I

The Soldier's March
Little Melodies by the Stream
The Soldier's March
The Big Pastorale
The Little Pastorale
Little Melodies by the Stream

PART II

The Soldier's March
The Royal March
The Little Concert
Three Dances
Tango, Waltz, Ragtime
The Devil's Dance
The Little Chorale
The Devil's Song
The Great Chorale
The Triumphal March of the Devil

The script for this performance of *L'Histoire du soldat* was adapted by Cathy Cevolli in conjunction with the Underground Railway Theater.

This concert is being recorded for broadcast on WBUR.FM.

The Handel & Haydn Society performance of *The Creation* recorded two weeks ago will be broadcast on WBUR on Sunday, November 19 at 9:00pm. The H&H performance of *La Resurrezione* recorded in March of 1988 will be broadcast on WBUR on November 26.

The Handel & Haydn Society is supported in part by generous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities and the Boston Arts Lottery Council.

The outbreak of World War I left Stravinsky stranded in Switzerland, cut off from his family estates. He had already composed — and become famous for — his three popular ballets, *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring*, but the war temporarily ended the performances of the Ballets Russes, so he had no royalties coming in. Under the circumstances, large works were utterly impractical. The idea occurred to him to create a small theater piece that could tour on a shoestring and perform almost anywhere. He adapted a scenario from a story by Afansiev involving encounters between the Devil and a nameless soldier, a sort of Everyman. The story was originally worked out with a Swiss writer, C.F. Ramuz, into an hour-long theater piece involving a narrator, a pair of actors, and a dancer, accompanied by an ensemble of seven instruments, chosen in such a way as to have one high and one low instrument from each family: clarinet and bassoon, cornet à piston and trombone, violin and double bass, plus a percussionist playing high and low pitched side drums, bass drum, cymbals, tambourine, and triangle.

Though derived from Russian folklore, the Ramuz version of *L'Histoire du Soldat* (*The Soldier's Tale*) is clearly related to the Faust legend. As usual, the Devil seems harmless at first. And what he asks for seems innocent, too — the soldier's fiddle, his companion in good times and bad, the symbol of his soul. The old man buys the fiddle in return for a magic book that foretells the future; the soldier soon becomes disillusioned and tries to get the fiddle back. In one encounter he plays cards with the Devil and plies him with wine until finally the Devil falls unconscious, enabling the soldier to make off with the instrument. He uses the violin to cure an invalid princess, who dances to his music and falls into his arms. When the Devil attempts to seize him again, his wild music forces the Devil into contortions and drives him away from the kingdom. Only after the soldier has been married to

the princess for several years and she urges him to take her to his old home does the Devil get his due; as soon as the soldier crosses the boarder, the Devil gets control of the violin.

The first performance, (Lausanne, Switzerland, September 28, 1918) was a great success, but an influenza epidemic closed the theaters and prevented further performances for a time. Stravinsky quickly created a concert suite out of the score, retaining most of the larger musical numbers; Ernest Ansermet led the first performance of the music in that form in London on July 20, 1920. The suite contains those parts of the score that are the most musically self-sufficient; it is the form in which most people know *L'Histoire*. But, these musical passages (and the less self-sufficient connecting links) were designed to be a part of a theatrical experience, wittily expanding and commenting on the action. As befits a work aimed at a broad audience, Stravinsky draws upon familiar types of compositions — the soldier's march homeward, the violin solo in which he fiddles merrily, his mock-heroic arrival at the palace, and the dances of the princess (in the popular styles of the tango, waltz, and ragtime) — though, of course, these familiar types become purely Stravinskian along the way. However pleasant *L'Histoire du soldat* is as a concert suite, it is in a staged performance that we can appreciate most fully Stravinsky's theatrical acumen.

Stravinsky himself commented that *L'Histoire* has a characteristic "sound" — "the scrape of the violin and the punctuation of the drums." These represented the Soldier's soul and the *diablerie*, respectively. The success of *L'Histoire du soldat* no doubt played a major role in Stravinsky's turning away from the gigantic orchestra of his earliest ballet successes. Through *L'Histoire du soldat*, among other pieces, Stravinsky had learned how much he could do with purposely limited forces and unlimited imagination.

Notes by Steven Ledbetter, musicologist and program annotator for the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

SOLOISTS

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THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY THEATER

Debra Wise *Narrator*

Jesse Moore *The Soldier*

Wes Sanders *The Devil*

ENSEMBLE

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Daniel Stepner *violin*
Robert Caplin *bass*

William Wrzesien *clarinet*
George Sakakeeny *basoon*
Dennis Alves *cornet*

Donald Sanders *trumpbone*
Dean Anderson *percussion*

For this production of *L'Histoire du Soldat* we will be using a new translation/adaptation of the Ramuz text which places the action in a contemporary American setting, while at the same time retaining the fairy tale magic of the original.

Cathy Cevolli, long time collaborator with the Underground Railway Theater, is the author of the text. Ms. Cevolli's most recent project with Underground Railway Theater was *The Anything Can Happen Roadshow*, which has toured theaters, universities and community centers in nine states. Ms. Cevolli is also a journalist whose work has appeared in the *Village Voice*, *Ms. Magazine* and *Mademoiselle*.

In this new adaptation of *The Soldier's Tale*, some of the conventional givens of the folk-tale disappear — kings, for example, and princesses; in their stead we are shown the temptation of a young man into war through the promise of adventure

in state-of-the-art technology. We accompany the young man — now a soldier — as he plunges from the free-fall of his war experience into a society where though once "a free soul in a t-shirt in the middle of a rich country," he finds himself now "a stranger in a strange land." The Devil who continues to tempt him is the father of subtler, more modern lies than the *diabolus* of the original. This is a Devil with Portfolio, who moves easily in the corridors of power — legal and illegal — presenting the soldier, who is now a veteran of a guerillas war in the Third World, with temptations which look remarkably like the rewards touted by the System of a giant industrial adventurism. The soldier wins by losing, as in the original, but the princess has become a hostess at a Vegas casino, and it is she who shows him the way back to his fiddle and to life among the living. Together they produce a son, and we are left at the end of the piece with a question.

HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY

JEFFREY RINK *Assistant Conductor*

Jeffrey Rink holds degrees in Music Theory and Conducting from the University of Maryland and subsequently studied conducting with Charles Bruck at the Pierre Monteux and Hartt Schools of Music.

In 1981 he was named as Associate Conductor of the Maryland Handel Festival and Music Director of the Masterworks Chorus and Orchestra Guild in Washington, D.C. which he led until 1986. In February 1986 he was appointed by Christopher Hogwood as Assistant Conductor of the Handel & Haydn Society which prompted his move to Boston. His concerts with H&H have received high praise from the *Boston Globe*, *New Yorker Magazine* and London's *Musical Times* and he has conducted the Society on several occasions in Symphony Hall.

Mr. Rink has recently appeared as a Guest Conductor with the Brockton Symphony Orchestra, the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, and the Orquestra Sinfonica de Monterrey in Mexico.

In addition to his work with H&H he currently serves as Music Director of the New England Philharmonic and the Longy Chamber and Young Performers Orchestras.

JOHN MC CONNELL, *Architectural Lecturer*

A native of Pittsfield, Massachusetts; John McConnell is the principal of his own architecture firm in Winchester, Massachusetts specializing in residential and small-scale design.

He was awarded an A.B. degree in English by Michigan State University, followed in 1976 by the Master in Architecture degree from Harvard University. The ensuing twelve years of professional practice for various firms in Boston include such accomplishments as the design of the Fye Chemical Laboratory for the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the award-winning

renovation of the Old South Church at Copley Square (both for Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott), as well as Cityfair, a large festival marketplace in the center of Charlotte, North Carolina (for Lane, Frenchman & Associates).

For eleven years, Mr. McConnell has been adjunct Professor of American Architectural History at Boston College, and was more recently appointed Lecturer in Architectural History at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. He is the author of the book *Courthouses of the Commonwealth: A History of Superior Courthouse Architecture in Massachusetts*.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY THEATER

The Underground Railway Theater tours locally and nationally with a diverse repertoire that combines highly visual theater, puppetry, actors and original music. Its offerings include adult cabaret, epic full-length plays, family shows, children's theater, workshops and residencies.

The group's recent work includes performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, a residency at the Smithsonian Institute, and a collaboration with Joseph Papp's Public Theater. They have been featured at national and international puppetry festivals in the United States and Canada, and received the Certificate of Excellence from UNIMA, an international organization of professional puppeteers, in both 1982 and 1985. The company also produces a performance series in the Greater Boston area, combining performances from its touring repertoire and original productions.

The Underground Railway Theater was founded in 1976 in Oberlin, Ohio — one of the last stops on the mid-western branch of the Underground Railroad. The company took its name in commemoration of that chapter in American history, signifying an act of hope and change.